

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to an office action dated February 23, 2006. The claims presently in the application are 3-4, 6, 14-15 and 20-25. Claims 20 and 22 have been amended to more clearly define the invention by providing that the sliding seat tray is mounted for movement in a single plane. Support for this amendment is found in the original specification in paragraph [033]. Since the extension 38 remains in a single plane, and since the extension is fixed to the seat tray 34, the seat tray 34 must also remain in a single plane.

In the office action the Examiner required that the specification be amended to remove matter added in the previous amendment. Applicants have complied with this request.

The Examiner rejected various claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, for lack of support of the feature of automatic movement of the leg rest in response to reclining of the seat back. Applicants have amended the independent claims to make clear that the leg support is mounted in a manner that allows the leg support to pivot as the user experiences extension tone.

In the office action the Examiner also rejected claims 3, 4 and 20-23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,488,332 to Markwald (hereinafter, "Markwald"). Markwald discloses a wheelchair designed to accommodate the extension tone of users. Markwald has a frame 4 on which is mounted a seat shell 6. The seat shell 6 includes a seat surface 7 and a backrest 8 that are pivotally connected to each other at pivot point 9. A linear guide 17 is what actually connects the seat surface to the frame 4. As disclosed at column 1, lines 64-65, column 2, lines 15-18, and column 4, lines 14-16, the seat surface is connected in a pivotal connection. Further, it can be seen by comparing Fig. 1 with Fig. 2, that the seat surface 7 pivots when it moves.

In contrast, in Applicants' invention, the sliding mechanism is configured to mount the seat tray for forward and rearward sliding movement in a single plane with respect to the base. This is not disclosed or suggested in Markwald. Accordingly,

Markwald neither anticipates or makes obvious Applicants' independent claims 20 and 22.

Hendrickson et al. in U.S. Patent No. 2,815,794 discloses a sliding seat for a railway car, with the seat apparently sliding in a plane. It would not be obvious, however, for a person skilled in the art to add the feature of a sliding seat in a plane to the seating system of Markwald. Hendrickson et al. has nothing to do with seating systems capable of handling extension tone. Further, adding the feature of sliding in a plane to the disclosure of Markwald would prevent the seat surface from pivoting, and this would go against the express teaching of Markwald that the seat surface is to be pivotally mounted to handle the extension tone of the user. Therefore, Applicants' invention, as defined in the independent claims, is patentable over not only the Markwald reference, but also Markwald in combination with Henderson et al. Since the independent claims are patentable over the references, for at least this reason the dependent claims are also patentable. Accordingly, Applicants request allowance of all the remaining claims.